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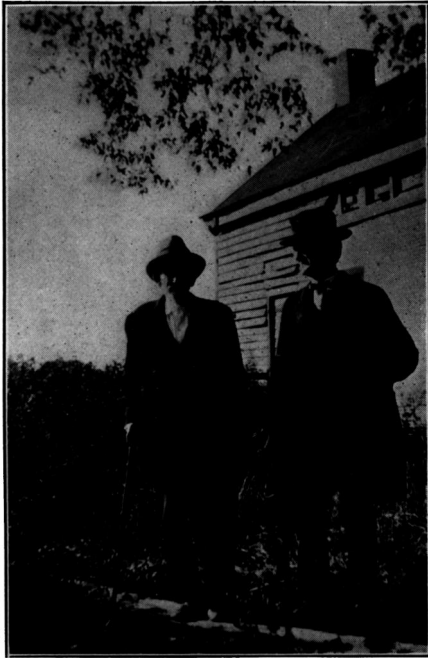
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GENERAL GRANT'S FIRST DAY'S MARCH.

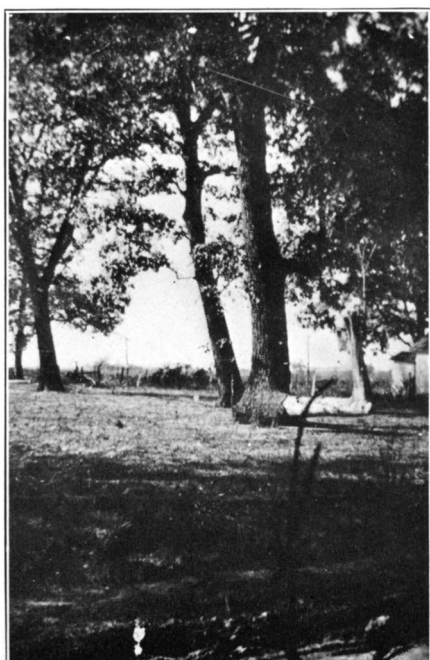
By NOAH C. BAINUM.

Eight miles west of Springfield, Illinois, on the public highway leading from Springfield to Jacksonville, is Riddle Hill and New Salem M. E. Church, within one hundred yards south of the church a flag flies—it is old glory, the flag of our country and the flag of Israel F. Pearce, a patriarch, and it arouses a love of country to see him and hear him tell the story of the Twenty-first Illinois Infantry, Ulysses S. Grant's own regiment, as it went into camp on the evening of July 3d, 1861, at the close of its first day's march to the great Civil War. It is of this first day's march we are writing, but since the story cannot be told without Israel F. Pearce and a few other persons, we must first say something about Israel. When we first interviewed him, on a beautiful October afternoon in 1922, his flag was flying from a thirty-foot flag pole, in his front yard and we may say this flag goes up at sunrise and down at sunset every day in response to the wishes of this old soldier. At the first interview we asked him if he lived on this spot July 3, 1861. He answered in a bright positive way and said, "No, but my girl did." And then pressing him a little further we ascertained that on this date there lived on this camp ground "his girl", Elizabeth L. Hinton, her sister, Catherine A. Hinton, their brother, Charles G. Hinton, and their grandfather, Caleb Short.

But before proceeding,—a little more about Israel F. Pearce, this story is not complete without him. He was born in Chester county, Pennsylvania, Brandywine township, December 9, 1835, and came to Springfield, Illinois, in 1858, the year of the Lincoln and Douglas debates, and then on eight miles further west in February, 1859. He states that he and John Hinton, a brother of his girl, came over to her home the evening of July 3, 1861, not expecting to see Grant and the 21st Illinois Regiment. Arriving they found the regiment encamped for the night. He walked around through the



ISRAEL F. PEARCE AND SENATOR
LAWRENCE Y. SHERMAN.



OLD WALNUT TREE.
(Two prints).

camp. The ground was all native woods then. There was no New Salem M. E. Church, only the fine old woods with the underbrush cut out leaving native walnut, hickory, oak and other trees found in abundance in this country during those days, along natural water courses. The regiment camped along a small running stream, where there was water and drainage, an ideal spot for just such rest as this new regiment was in need of.

Colonel Grant pitched his tent at the top of the sloping ground that gradually inclines east and north into the little stream along which the regiment camped. His tent was within two hundred feet of a small house then occupied by Caleb Short and the Hintons. Grant went to the east door of the house, stood near while members of the family were in the door and conversed with him. The picture here shown is at the south door of the house with Israel F. Pearce standing in the southwest corner and another picture is of Israel F. Pearce, standing near the old Short house.

The outstanding monument of the camp is the black walnut tree shown in the picture. A tree now some three feet in diameter at the base, with the unusual limb, now dead, as will be noted from an inspection of the picture, a limb horizontal with the earth and then at the end perpendicular and parallel with the main tree, a freak in tree life as is noticeable to persons acquainted with tree growth. Grant's tent was pitched a few feet west of the tree and a little to its left. The building shown in the picture is a coal house at the rear of Salem church and the fence is along the Jacksonville highway. All this territory was occupied by the regiment to the right of and east of the tree down to and along the stream. The Caleb Short house where Israel F. Pearce's girl lived is about two hundred feet to the left and west of the walnut tree.

You may ask what is particularly interesting about this tree. The answer is that this peculiar limb of this old black walnut tree was used by Grant as his writing table. The story of the Short family is and it is corroborated by Colonel Joseph W. Vance, then an officer of the regiment, afterwards adjutant general of Illinois, and now living at 1487 W. 45th street, Los Angeles, California, that Colonel Grant sat astride the limb and wrote his orders for the day in the adjutant's

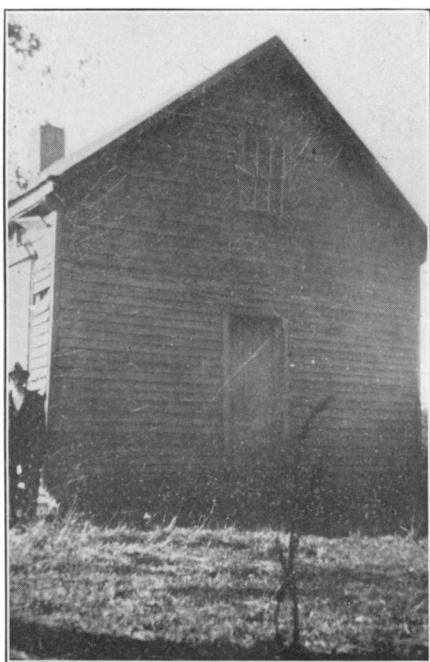
order book. The adjutant then communicated verbally the orders to the regiment, in line, after it was assembled for the second day's march and while on the morning of July 4, 1861, camp was being struck at the time Grant was writing, using this famous tree for his writing table.

One purpose of this article is to bring to the notice of the public this walnut tree and its peculiar limb, used as it was by Colonel Grant, in writing the first orders written by him during the Civil War, after his regiment was in active service. It deserves to be placed in history along with the famous "charter oak" and Appomattox and its famous apple tree. The famous Appomattox apple tree is mentioned in Grant's memoirs but he says nothing of the equally celebrated walnut tree. The tree now stands as a silent sentinel and has so stood for all these years, guarding jealously the echo of the songs and stories told by the men of this historic regiment and its great commander on this night, July 3, 1861, after its first day's march.

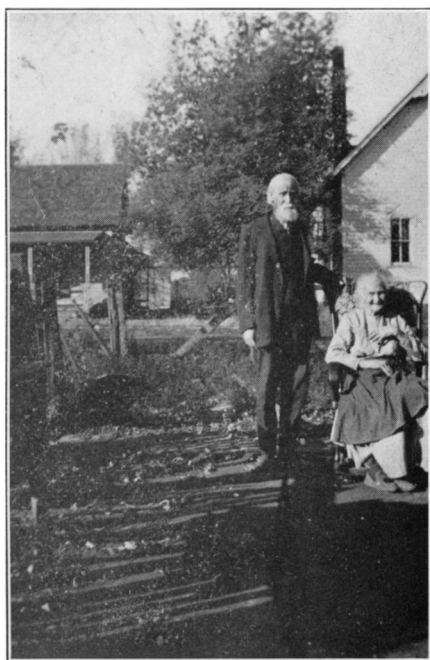
And we may say, in passing, that there is a movement now on foot to erect a tablet or monument at or near the tree commemorating Grant's first camp after his regiment was in active duty and we feel sure that this will soon be accomplished.

Why should it not be done? Here is a memorable tree unnoticed save by a few who know the history, but they, like the silent commander, will soon pass on and none will be left to tell the story. This scene is the genesis of the military leader whose first day's march led from here to Shiloh, Vicksburg and Appomattox.

Reverting to Israel F. Pearce: On August 9th, 1861, he followed Colonel Grant by enlisting in company B, 30th Illinois Infantry, Logan's division, mustered in at camp Butler, east of Springfield; went to Cairo, Illinois, joined Grant's army, was at Forts Henry and Donelson and on July 4, 1863, marched into Vicksburg with General Grant and his army just two years after the 21st regiment left its first camp and the famous walnut tree, and then this old patriot marched with Sherman to the sea up through the Carolinas and on to Washington and participated in the grand review up Pennsylvania avenue, and, was mustered out of the service at Louis-



ISRAEL F. PEARCE AND HINTON
HOME.



CHARLES EWELL AND MOTHER.

ville, Kentucky, July 15, 1865. He talked to Grant frequently during the war and about his first camp. Coming home from the war, Pearce married his girl (Miss Elizabeth L. Hinton) and together they kept watch from their humble home over this camp until June 24, 1886, she passed away and on to the last and eternal camp ground. But Israel F. Pearce clear of mind and body, to fight for his country and its flag, still lives on the old first camp ground in full view of the famous walnut tree. A talk with him is an inspiration and is full of love and admiration for Grant.

We must not forget there is one other living man, not a member of the regiment, besides Israel F. Pearce who was present July 3, 1861. It is Charles Ewell of Curran, Illinois, a small village about two miles south of the walnut tree. He was then a boy of fourteen years, living with his parents, a little southeast of the camp. The mother of Charles Ewell is still living in a house adjoining her son, full of years and good deeds, ninety-seven years old, born near the first camp and was living there July 3, 1861, with her husband and family; one of her pleasant memories is that she baked corn bread for the men of the 21st regiment during the entire night of July 3, 1861, and her son, Charles, as fast as the corn bread was baked, carried it to the camp ground and distributed it to the men of the regiment and in this humble way they did their part in the great struggle for the preservation of the Union and for human liberty. She lives now at the fine old age of ninety-seven, to tell the story, patriotic and full of love for her country and its old flag. She and her son, Charles, are shown in the picture taken October 12, 1922.

General Grant in the following language tells something of his first command: "I was appointed Colonel of the twenty-first Illinois volunteer infantry by Governor Richard Yates, sometime in June, 1861, and assumed command of the regiment on the 16th of that month. The regiment was mustered into the service of the United States in the latter part of the same month. Being ordered to rendezvous the regiment at Quincy, Illinois, I thought for the purpose of discipline and speedy efficiency for the field, it would be well to march the regiment across the country, instead of transporting by rail; accordingly, on the 3rd day of July, 1861, the

march was commenced from Camp Yates, Springfield, Illinois, and continued until about three miles beyond the Illinois river, when dispatches were received changing the destination of the regiment to Ironton, Missouri, and directing me to return to the river and take a steamer which had been sent there for the purpose of transporting the regiment to St. Louis. The steamer failing to reach the point of embarkation, several days were lost. In the meantime a portion of the sixteenth infantry, under Colonel Smith, were reported surrounded by the enemy at a point on the Hannibal and St. Joseph railroad west of Palmyra and the twenty-first was ordered to their relief. Under these circumstances expedition was necessary; accordingly the march was abandoned, and the railroad was called into requisition. Before the twenty-first reached its new destination the sixteenth had extricated itself. The twenty-first was then kept on duty on the line of the Hannibal and St. Joseph railroad for about two weeks without however, meeting an enemy or an incident worth relating. We did make one march, however, during that time, from Salt River, Missouri, to Florida, Missouri, and returned in search of Tom Harris, who was reported in that neighborhood with a handful of rebels. It was impossible, however, to get nearer than a day's march of him. From Salt River the regiment went to Mexico, Missouri, where it remained for two weeks thence to Ironton, Missouri, passing through St. Louis on the 7th of August, when I was assigned to duty as a brigadier general, and turned over the command of the regiment to that gallant and christian officer, Colonel Alexander, who afterwards yielded up his life whilst nobly leading it in the battle of Chickamauga."

Previous to starting on its march the regiment was quartered in Camp Yates, the old State Fair grounds, situated on west Washington street, Springfield, Illinois, at the intersection with Lincoln avenue. The Dubois school now stands on the site of Camp Yates.

A few days before July 3, 1861, the regiment was addressed by Congressman John A. McClernand and John A. Logan, both afterwards Major Generals in the Civil War and both served under Grant. McClernand and Logan spoke eloquently and at length. Logan speaking last introduced

Grant, the new colonel to the regiment. He was called upon for a speech. He walked a few steps forward and at last speaking, not loud, but in a clear and calm voice said, "Men, go to your quarters." The men seemed dazed and astounded but from the manner in which these few words were uttered and the demeanor of Grant, the men awoke to the fact that they had a real commander.

The first day's march was commenced about eleven A. M. and reached the first camp about 5 P. M. The regiment was halted in column of companies in the woods, arms were stacked and when the wagon train came into camp, each company unloaded its wagon, arranged its tents by opening and spreading on the ground, and at one tap of a bass drum the tents were raised, at two taps ropes were stretched and tent pins adjusted, at three taps the stakes were driven and the regiment was under canvas in its first tented field. The instructions for pitching the tents were given by Colonel Grant verbally and as given repeated by each captain to his men. It was "regular army method" the long roll was beaten on the drums, the roll called and absentees noted. The first day's march was attended with hardships, there were stragglers and absentees and the punishment awarded was extra guard duty for both officers and men. The men made their camp fires and cooked their first meal in camp and after supper there were many stories about the first experience of real marching on the first day's march.

At seven o'clock officers' call was sounded and Colonel Grant talked to the men about the absolute necessity of enforcing respect for the inhabitants of the country through which the regiment was marching and for their property, and that he would hold the captains of the companies personally responsible for the acts of their men.

On July 3, 1922, eleven of the survivors of the twenty-first regiment met on the site of old Camp Yates, a part of which is now occupied by Dubois school, as stated in Springfield, and held a reunion and placed a bronze tablet on the school building commemorating the point from which the regiment began its march to the war and a feature of this reunion was a visit to the site of the first night's camp near Riddle Hill where an abundant chicken dinner was served to those in attendance by the ladies of the neighborhood.